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A FETISH LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE



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Puppy: Musings on Then and Now

By Papa Woof Roth

My Journey:

I have been thinking a lot about how far puppy has come over the years I have been in it. These are my thoughts and feelings; what I feel from the heart:

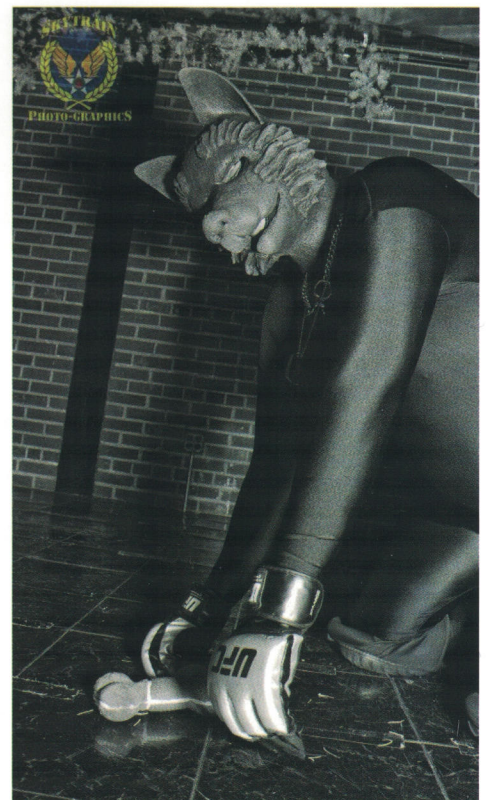
Growing up I was always pretty much on the outside looking in on life. I didn't get along and was heavily bullied all through school for being a "fag." I just never really had the "human connection." In fact, I really didn't find real friends and "brothers" until I got involved in the Leather, pup, and furry communities.

I discovered what being a "human dog" was back in 1986 when I lived in Houston, TX. I trained to be a Sir with Master Michael (Little Misery), and while he saw in me the capability to be an effective Sir (to the point I was awarded my flog) by him, he also saw in me (and was the first to say I had) some very canine traits and felt I was more Alpha than Sir. I spent many years in the Houston community and sadly had to move in '99 just as the first puppy contest/event started to enter the planning stages. I knew all those involved and was proud to call them friends.

As the years progressed, so did I. Sometimes it took me longer to learn the lessons I needed to

learn. I had to learn patience, openness, honor, acceptance, and knowing that sometimes things or relationships just don't work out the way we want them to—I had to learn that the hard way with former pups. Even though I thought everything needed for a good relationship was there at the beginning, in the end, it wasn't, and after trials and tribulations I learned that not every pup is for every Handler. I also learned that if you have a pup that will never be really happy with you, chances are s/he is looking for the next latest and greatest "dream" Handler, kind of making you a mere stepping stone till they find him or her. Sometimes, s/he will eventually find whatever it is s/he is looking for. Though, sometimes it will be a lifelong search leaving a trail of unfulfilled relationships along the way.

With things the way they are today, you might think you have found the "virtual" dream person, but with that has to come "real life," and that is where you really have to click and match up. You might be great online but annoy the shit out of each other in person, or you might find that there is no chemistry or that you want something completely different than the other does. I was in a triad relationship that ended up with me being the odd one out. The pup I had fallen for had met



someone that he saw as his dream Dom, and while he would only admit it was a friendship, once he finished college, the next day he move in with the “friend.” (Funny that my other partner and I ended up losing our connection as well, and he sided with the pup on things.) So I retreated.

I laid low for actually quite a while as I did not want to be involved in a drama war and actually had a very good “kink aware” therapist that helped me considerably. As time passed and things came out, I learned that I really wasn’t crazy, and I did have reasonable cause to feel the way I did.

After taking time for myself, I restarted my search for a pup (and partner). I met some great pups on my search and when Boo and I started talking, things really meshed. This time around, though, I wanted it to be something mutual: I wanted both of us wanting the same things, both of us wanting to focus on the other to ensure their happiness and well-being. Boo and I had that click! My dream had come true, my search ended. Boo and I will have been together (in person) four years in February, and we are just as happy now as we were in the beginning. Sometimes the stars and the planets just line up, and you do, in fact, find that special someone with whom things really do mesh together to make what is not only a great couple but also a great Handler/Alpha to pup relationship.

Puppy Then

Someone had commented that the history and legacy of puppy must be protected. I agree! We have to remember where we come from, but we also have to learn, grow, and evolve as the greater community does if it’s going to keep the momentum and relevancy it enjoys. I really think back to how the Leather community was back then and how it is now. Yes, we do need to remember our history and those that have come before us, as they are the ones that helped pave the way for what we have now. But we also have to grow and adapt to change.

Way back when, we had contact magazines, where you wrote to a PO Box (that’s Post Office Box—for all you young ones) in order to connect with others in the community. Then, we had something amazing called BBS’s (that is, Dial-Up Bulletin Board Systems) come into existence when more and more people got computers and (gasp) modems. From there we got AOL, groups, IRC (Internet Relay Chat), chat, etc., and as time went by, something called “social networking” happened. Even though there have been places like Pupzone, Doghouse and Fetlife for years, it really had someone serving as a kind of a boundary, limiting those that could/would participate. I know firsthand that on some of those sites, one experienced those that would only allow things they want posted or events they wanted promoted. It was kind of sad and frustrating. How can things progress if those who should be excited about development and growth don’t want it to happen because they don’t want to give up control?

There wasn’t so much a focus on forced protocols as much as it was just the way things were. If you were a boy (or pup) and you walked into the Ripcord wearing a collar, it was hands off, unless he talked to your Sir before interacting with you. Today there really isn’t that type of respect for the most part. For pups, as time passes on, I continue to see less and less a question asked about the collar they are wearing and if they have an Owner or Alpha. Sirs and Alphas used to hold great conversations, learning from each other. And the same went for the boys (and for the few pups that were around). The word COMMUNITY really had meaning.

Before social networking, you would really take time to learn who someone was and what they were about. You had to because you were pretty much located in the same city. Being collared was something that was not an overnight thing but evolved over time. I still remember the now somewhat antiquated Three-Collar System—collar of consideration, for training, and, finally, the formal collar. Each of those was earned over time.

Pup Play Now

For many today, the puppy community is made to fit whatever needs (sexual or platonic) they may have. They find puppy, and it’s like the lights suddenly go on and the AHA! moment happens. For some, their attraction to puppy comes from something inside that has been trying to get out and find expression. Unfortunately, until finding puppy, they didn’t know how to express this inner desire or let it out. For others, though, puppy is just something new, a new kink they want to try out. And, there is nothing wrong with either approaches to and/or uses of puppy (not that these are even exhaustive of people’s attraction to puppy), and both sides have to respect the other for what they are looking to get out of the experience.

In saying that, the puppy community needs to be more accepting for what the many various pups are wanting. Some pups want to be “show pups,” others “working dogs,” while others just a loving companion that wants to play fetch. If you want one or all of those, that is great! Don’t disparage others for what they want. If you don’t like or want to be a part of a contest, fine—others do like that and want to do that. If you love being in a mosh pit, that’s fine! But if a pup doesn’t like romping and rolling around but rather just wants to play games with his Handler, that’s their prerogative and right as pup. Just like pups need to be accepting that there are male, female, and transgendered pups. That there are pups that sex is an integral part of their pup play, while others, there are no sexual aspects in their play. Be kind, considerate, and understanding. If it’s not something that is part of what puppy is for you, that doesn’t mean it’s wrong, it just means it’s not right for you.

In Sum

Each of us is unique as a human and as a Handler or puppy. Make puppy your own! But also make

it safe, friendly, and welcoming to those that are just finding it or learning. It’s also very important to realize that learning things online is great, but you HAVE TO HAVE REAL LIFE, IN PERSON EXPERIENCE to complete the learning process! For those of you that have been around awhile, REMEMBER, we all had to start somewhere! We all needed to find others and places to learn what we know now. Don’t be short or snarky with someone just because they don’t know something you think is crucial to life as a Handler/pup. If someone has a misconception, simply help them learn the truth. If they are considering something unsafe, make sure they know the facts before jumping in with all paws.

Let’s make 2018 the “Year of the Puppy” and really show what COMMUNITY as Handlers and pups means!!

Papa Woof, as he is known by those close to him, has been active in the community since the early 80’s. He grew up in Dayton, OH before moving to Houston, TX and finally landing in Saint Louis, MO in 1999, where he has taken his activity in the community to all new levels. He also enjoys riding his two motorcycles and takes his love for biking to the level of being a motorcycle medic in the Rescue Riders & Road Guardians Motorcycle Groups. He also runs the Mephit Fur Meet, a Furry Science Fiction Convention in Memphis, TN on Labor Day weekend.

Papa Woof and his husband (and pup) Boo are the happy parents of four monster dogs and were part of the management team at the Bad Dog Bar & Grill in Saint Louis, MO and now Executive Chef Consultant for other restaurants. He and Boo are the founders of the Saint Louis Puppy Patrol, The Midwest Puppy Contest, a 13-state regional puppy contest for those who are puppy and pet at heart. Papa Woof was also the Co-Owner/Co-Producer of the International Puppy Contest in Saint Louis, MO until 2016.



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“Who Let the Dogs Out?”

Overcoming a Community's Resistance to Pups

By Marcus

“Ah, hell. Here come the damn pups.”

“Just cos you're a pup doesn't mean I have to give you scratches [sic].”

“Get away from me, dude! Like I'm the fuck into dogs!”

I've heard some pretty nasty things said about the Handler/pup community by those outside of it, especially at CLAW (that is, the Cleveland Leather Annual Weekend) this past April. As a nascent Handler/Trainer, naturally, I wanted to know more. Why would there be such an unwelcoming attitude in a community that has worked so hard—since its beginnings—to encourage and foster greater welcome and understanding of sexual other? Why, despite this, do I experience such blatant and overt disdain towards the pup-play community by so many (though definitely not a majority) of our sisters and brothers in the larger Leather community? I wanted to know, and so I inquired, and the following article stands as the fruit of that inquiry.

Role Play

First off—and this statement is simply a reminder to my fellow Handlers and pups—pup play is role play. I know it sounds obvious, LOL, but, please, hear me out. In any form of role play, we all know that there is often (though not always) a significant amount of preparation needed beforehand. Not only must the scene itself be setup, but characters must be assumed, and head-spaces entered. I know one Daddy/son scene in which I participated required almost six hours of preparation. My Daddy described to me his desired scene, gave me the full layout of the house I would have to quickly “make my own as his son” as well as provided for me the desired attire for the encounter. I, then, proceeded to develop the sought-after character. I texted him as I would my dad and fine-tuned my character over the course of the five hours leading up to the scene. By the time I arrived at “my bedroom” (which had also been

setup according to predetermined specs), my Dad was there to scold me for being late on coming home, and I, the disobedient, know-it-all jock of a son he wanted me to be, was solid enough in my headspace not only to argue but to fight back, and the scene ensued to both our satisfaction.

Why do I share this? Because pup play is role play, and if it takes such persons who are actually into the same fetish that much time to setup and enter a scene, how much longer and, not to mention, unfair is it to ask those who may not even find the fetish of pup play interesting to enter into such a scene at the drop of a hat? Pup play is role play. And when we find ourselves encountering those who aren't in the headspace nor looking to be in the headspace for pup play, we need to recognize that and respect it. Does it mean we leave the encounter altogether? Perhaps. Or one could simply take on the role of a facilitator and teacher in such times. I often get asked questions about pup play by those outside of the community, and most of these discussions, I find, end with either the other person(s) continuing to maintain a very healthy curiosity surrounding pup play OR (even better) it ends in a fun and engaging "hands-on" learning experience. Either way, the fetish is affirmed, and this is always our goal.

Biological dogs

But, pups will be pups. I understand this. I mean, look to our biological four-legged friends, you know, the ones that go up to just about anyone and anything demanding their love and attention. Can we ask anything different of our human pups? This is where Handlers/Trainers are CRUCIAL! Again, pups will be pups, so Handlers/Trainers! We must take the time to work with and train our pup/s to recognize and respect good boundaries when it comes to Hoomans. Just like I'd expect my biological Cairn Terrier not to jump up on the "guests" I invite to my home or to go up and "bother" folks at the park or on the trail, so likewise I'd expect the same checked behavior from a human pup, especially, if she or he is being handled by a Handler/Trainer at the time. Sure, pups will be pups, but that cannot be our excuse! It WON'T get us very far!

Hoomans

I often watch how people interact with biological dogs and always find a wide variety of responses. At the same time, I watch how hoomans interact with human pups, and I so often witness a similar variety of responses. Now, for me, it takes no time at all to enter into the headspace of a Handler/Trainer or pup. And there are those even outside the fetish that just understand pups and how to engage them. What we as Handlers/Trainers as well as pups need to remember is that not everyone is like this. Not everyone exists in or enters quickly into headspace. And so, out of respect for those who may take a bit more time to "get in the zone," if you will, it might be better to approach all individuals as if they are those types of people who take time. Failure to do so might result

in you making individuals uncomfortable, thereby, potentially hurting the presence of pups at Leather events. Remember, pup play is role play, and just because we may be in our headspace and "in the zone," that doesn't mean others are, especially, at Leather events.

The Unfortunate Side of Hoods

So, let's say a group of hoomans, who do not engage the pup fetish regularly—if ever—actually lets you, a pup, into their circle of friends/acquaintances for a moment. It is important to remember that hoods can greatly hinder communication! If you are a pup who still communicates with human words while in hood (and tail, if applicable), it might be best to go ahead and remove your hood when conversing with others. Rooms are often loud, and muffled speech rendered-even-more-incoherent through excessive background noise will only serve to frustrate the conversation more. This in turn could make for a rough encounter and possibly reinforce the negative response for individuals to have even less patience with pups. Again, our goal is to affirm and encourage the presence of pups at Leather/fetish events, not discourage. We need to be on guard not to detract from this end.

Now, if you are a pup who loses human speech when in your gear, be careful and use good judgment. A speechless pup who finds his or her way into a group of hoomans—who may or may not have much experience with pups and their fetish—may make those in the group uneasy. Now, my experience has been that they only become uneasy out of a real and sincere desire to engage the pup; they just lack the skills to do so or simply don't know how to do so. Like I said, use right judgment. If a group doesn't seem too keen on pups, it's probably best you don't enter into that circle. Or, have a Handler/Trainer present who can assist the hoomans in their interactions and engagement of you and your friends as pups. Again, this would be no different than what one would expect of a biological pup and his/her owner.

All this being said, another unfortunate downfall to the hood is the fact that a pup's face is so often hidden. So many within the community want to see faces. I know for myself, the face is even more important than the body when it comes to physical attraction. And so, I often find myself encountering less and less pups sexually simply because I can't see their faces. But, the face isn't something that just needs to look pretty. The face and its accompanying facial expressions are what I rely on, read, and react to in my day-to-day encounters with all individuals, be it at a Leather event, in the work place, or at social outings. It tells me whether or not I can trust you, whether or not you understand what I am saying, whether or not you're even enjoying what I am saying, among other things. When one dons a pup hood, this vital form of human communication—the face—is lost. Be aware of this and ask yourselves, whenever you are encountering hoomans, do you need to have the hood on? Taking the hood off gives you a face as well as

gives a face to the community. Now, for speechless pups, I would say the hood is necessary to signal to groups that you are that deep into your headspace. But, again, use good judgment and remember that having a good Handler/Trainer present would do well to facilitate and ease engagement.

Is This Our Problem to Begin With?

Now, I've been talking a lot in this article about "uneasiness" and our potentially making others "uncomfortable" by our presence and our fetish. Some who read this article might think, "Fuck them! Why do I care how they feel?" I think it all comes down to mutual respect. Does the problem reside entirely with us? By all means no! There is movement that HAS to happen on the side of the greater community if we are to enjoy our fullest welcome and inclusion. But, I feel if we follow the simple suggestions spelled out in this article, it could be the start of a whole new shared experience within the community as a whole. Someone's gotta get the ball rolling first. Someone's gotta make the first move; take the first step. Why not let it be us! It puts us in the proactive role. WE become the leaders in fostering greater welcome and inclusion in the community.

In Sum:

And so, going forward, I as a Handler/Trainer as well as pup (when in that headspace) will always strive to remember:

1. Pup play is role play.
2. to respect people's processes of entering into headspace.
3. to approach new people and groups mindful of the fact that they are more than likely NOT in the headspace for pup play.
4. to be sure that I and my pup or I as pup can communicate clearly and effectively—either by removing my hood or by having a Handler/Trainer present to facilitate.
5. to take the first steps to build up and positively affirm pup play in the greater Leather community.

Perhaps by doing our own small parts, these parts will add up to an overwhelming and effective whole. We are the ambassadors of our own fetish. May we always strive to set good examples and to build good relationships between ourselves and those outside our community.

MARCUS, AKA PUP BREWTUS (when in that headspace), lives in Minneapolis, MN with his (de facto) Handler and two biological puppies. His interests include music, language, philosophy, and religious studies, while his "other" interests are black, dark blue, red, yellow, hunter green, dark pink, teal, and magenta. He currently serves as COO of Barking News Media, LLC and Director of its main publication, Barking News Magazine.


A muscular man is shown from the waist up, wearing a black harness and black underwear with a white waistband that says 'MASKULO'. Several US dollar bills are tucked into the underwear. He is also wearing a black leather arm brace on his right arm.

It's what's underneath that counts!

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RAINBOW ROAD





Pups Find Home with Gateway Faery Godmothers

A Story of Coming Together for the Sake of Doing Good

By pup Skyy Belle

When pup Skyy Belle approached Faery Anne Kerrsaway of St. Louis, MO to learn more about the Gateway Faery Godmothers, the alien-green pup never imagined the prospects in store. After two hours of dialogue with Faery Anne, pup Skyy learned all about the organization and what they stood for. He learned about their beliefs and values, and in a flash, a mutual excitement and motivation for possible collaboration between the two individuals' respective groups billowed forth like a sudden poof of pixie dust. They both desired and were working so hard to try and make the world a better place. Could they do this together? How might they involve their respective groups? These questions quickly became the focal point of their conversation.

Skyy expressed to Faery Anne that he admired the Godmothers because of their constant giving back to the community through charitable events for local organizations, and how he truly wished that the pups in the Gateway City region could form a similar structure. This is when Faery Anne rolled out an idea that managed to combine the Faery Godmothers with the pup community. And, just like that, the Faithful Hounds of the Gateway were born, filling the role as guards to the Godmothers. This unique concept launched its start with the Gateway Faery Godmothers, providing a foundational role in which pups and Godmothers can come together in their respective characters and be able to work together to build up and support the community and its charitable projects.

And so, pups can remain their pawesome pup selves when joining the Godmothers. They become a Faithful Hound. Of course, if they want to become a Godmother as well, that option remains too. Or if wanting to pursue both options, hell, go for it! Having the option to be whatever you want in the group helps pups and Faeries find self-expression. Advancement of pup and Faery self-discovery is a beautiful end and the ultimate goal of the Gateway Faery Godmothers and their Faithful Hounds.

This idea works not only for a successful and mutual giving back to the community through various fundraising, charitable, and community-outreach events, but also serves as a great opportunity to show that by working together Faeries and Hounds can achieve great things together.

One of Skyy's main concerns, however, was that the community did not really understand pups and pup play. Awareness and education of the pup community is such a vital concept to him, and what a great way to do it! The Godmothers have fully embraced their Faithful Hounds with open arms. Not only is this unique group giving back to the community, but it is also boosting awareness by including walks with their hounds in the St. Louis area parks, visiting various venues, and so much more!

One might be asking, how do I spot a Faithful Hound? The idea is quite simple really, just like the Faeries have their wands and distinctive makeup, the Hounds have an item unique to them as well. Each Hound in the group is given a cape and a unique Faithful Hound name. The cape helps identify the Hounds and can be decorated however the Hound chooses. Another distinguishing feature is that the Hounds also function as guards to the Faeries. It is common to see a Gateway Faery Godmother walking their Hound on a leash at events. So, the next community event you attend in St. Louis, look for the Gateway Faery Godmothers and their guardian friends working to make the world a better place.

The Gateway Faery Godmothers is an open and inclusive group of individuals working to build community awareness of sexual otherness while at the same time supporting and hosting a wide array of charitable events for local and regional organizations within the Saint Louis, MO area. For more information on how to support or even become a Godmother, please contact pup Skyy Belle at ju63077@yahoo.com.

The Faithful Hounds of the Gateway is an open and inclusive group of pup individuals who work alongside the Gateway Faery Godmothers in support of their charitable events hosted around the Saint Louis, MO region throughout the year. A Faithful Hound is present to the Godmothers' needs and makes itself available in either support or leadership roles based on need and ability. To learn more about the Faithful Hounds, please contact pup Skyy Belle at ju63077@yahoo.com.

Pup Skyy is a theatrical show pup that resides in St. Louis, MO. Skyy believes in fostering greater pup awareness, bolstering community service, and is currently runs with the Muekker Pack. His passion is being on stage, expressing himself through drag, boylesque, and theater. For him, being a pup has greatly helped in dealing with his anxiety, and he has enjoyed every minute of it!



pup Hazmat



pup Stripe

Interview with Justin St Clair, President, Executive Director, and lifetime member of the CLAW Board of Directors

Interview conducted by MARCUS, aka pup Brevtus



1) What are your names: real and pseudonym (i.e., scene name)?

Justin St Clair or simply Justin. Sir or Daddy also work!!

2) How do you identify (Sir, boy, Handler, pup, etc.)?

Sir, but probably more from a puppy perspective than a Dom/submissive perspective. I definitely identify as more of a Handler/Trainer Sir than your traditional Leather Sir.

3) When were you first introduced into the leather community?

About twenty years ago in Chicago. I simply started going out to the local Leather bars—Cellblock, Touché, also The Eagle in those days. And, the more I hung out in these places, the more I entered into the community.

4) What colors do you typically flag?

Navy blue and yellow. Those are my two favorites. And some gray in there works as well. Always on the left.

5) Have you competed for any titles? If so, have you won any titles and what are the titles?

Absolutely. I was Mr. Mephisto 2007 in Chicago. In fact, I was the last title holder for that contest, which eventually became Mr. Leather 64Ten. This, of course, sent me to IML. Then, in 2012, I competed and won Illinois Leather Sir, which sent me to Great Lakes Leather Alliance (GLLA) in 2013. And though the title that year went to someone else, I did go on to compete and win International Trainer 2014 thanks to the support of the Board [of Directors] for Illinois Leather Sir.

6) Regarding IPAHW (International Puppy and Handler Weekend), what is your current position/title?

I am the Executive Producer.

7) Would you tell me a bit about the event? Its history? Etc.?

So, the history of IPAHW started as an idea entertained and developed about three years ago—the idea of simply having a fun-filled weekend for puppies. At the same time, IPTC and IPC were both deciding whether or not it would be a good idea to consider merging their two contests. Obviously, the merger was a go, and IPAHW was created to both sponsor and host the contests.

8) Who all were involved in the decision to found and form IPAHW?

That is a difficult question. The concept had been rolling around in my head since I became the producer of IPTC. Of course, the owners of both competitions were a major part of the process, but there were also so many countless others who

just knew that this event needed to be something more than just a contest. So, Pup Tripp Hutchins, IPC Owner and Executive Producer, and I as IPTC Producer coordinated the “fun” parts of the weekend, that is, the non-contest parts. This truly made it a weekend event that also happened to have two contests. The truth of the matter is, IPAHW would eventually have been created, even if neither of the contests had decided to join forces. The concept was independent.

9) How long has IPAHW been in existence?

This is IPAHW's second year.

10) Anything new this year?

Yes and no. Mostly, we took our concepts from last year and expanded them. We really aren't trying to do anything “new” this year, we're just trying to make the things that worked last year bigger and better. Now, that being said, we are adding a Gear and Furry Dance Party.

11) And the motivation for this?

My pup, Kona, and I actually had a long discussion at Midwest Fur Fest last year after seeing a great deal of cross-over between the furry and puppy communities. In the end, we just knew we needed to capitalize on this kind of fun. Anyone who has been to furry con knows that the furries do it right! The puppy community is evolving and becoming something very different from its Leather origins. We recognized that we had to evolve our events to match the community's needs. I mean, isn't that what community service really revolves around?

1



2) **CLAW has no contests, then you have IPAHW with quasi two and a half contests? Why is that?**

Well, as mentioned earlier, one of the main purposes for IPAHW was to create an amazing weekend and bring these two contests together and, potentially, make them one contest instead of two someday. That's still a ways down the road. So, yes, IPAHW houses these contests and we're happy to have them, but the end goal is the celebration of a huge, MASSIVE puppy weekend that just "happens" to have contests attached. I think that IPAHW is a bigger concept than just a contest or two. As the Executive Producer of IPTC, I will say that this idea is not new to our organization and is something we have striven to accomplish more and more each year. It seems IPC has also been engaged in making their event more than just a contest as well, so that definitely makes this end goal must easier to accomplish.

13) **Does IPAHW support charities and non-profits?**

At this point, no. We made a conscious decision to put our efforts into the immediate community. So, instead of being a fundraiser, we're offering education and fun, while boasting a low registration fee, 30.00 USD. This helps us to build the community and the event. Once built, then we can move on to funding charities, if we choose. I know that sounds backwards in our community. But honestly, I have a fear that we have focused a little too much on money in our community. . . to the point that

events can cease being fun. If every event is serious and asking for money, and the fun stops, I fear that we will eventually lose the next generation.

14) **Is IPAHW its own company?**

International Puppy and Handler Weekend is trademarked and is incorporated.

15) **What makes IPAHW unique compared to other community events/gatherings?**

I think it is because our leadership has looked at other Leather contests and noticed how we need to understand (as a community) that pup and Leather are not the same thing. And so, we started catering to the things that work for puppy and puppy alone—not just the historical things traditionally associated with general Leather events.

16) **So, what are the highlights for IPAHW this year? What should attendees be on the lookout for?**

I'd say definitely furry/puppy dance party, the Gear & Furry Dance Party. The ball pit and obstacle course are also fan favorites. I would also note that no where in any of our contests titles do we care about gender or orientation. IPAHW actually has a Code of Conduct that specifically addresses such things like shaming and discrimination. Come as you are. All are welcome!

17) **What do you think brings people to IPAHW each year? Why attend?**

Because we focus on fun! We are not structured

around your typical Leather events/contest. And this is very freeing. While I love the contest circuit, I have seen too many titleholders get emotionally destroyed by the weight of their titles. Yes, we have a contest or two. . . but the focus is fun! That's why we have the activity area open at the same time as the classes and the vendors are open during the contest. We want to make sure to acknowledge the attendees who are NOT there for the contest or the workshops.

18) **What are your favorite events at IPAHW?**

The Ball Pin, of course! It is a great big octagonal pit full of ten thousand plastic balls! 'Nuff said!

19) **Anything else you want to tell me?**

In the end, I just want to stress our pride and joy at IPAHW which is the fact that we are doing everything in our power to make this event an all-inclusive, safe space. We are taking a hard stand on consent and have gone so far as to literally write in our Code of Conduct our utter distaste and zero-tolerance for harassment, bullying, body shaming, and anything else of that ilk. We definitely want people to be free, to feel free to enjoy themselves, and enjoy themselves to the fullest.

16) **Any last tidbit you'd like to give?**

If you haven't registered, it's not too late! Go online to <https://ipahw.wordpress.com/registration/> and GET REGISTERED! It's gonna be a great weekend!!!

Insights from pup Link A Message for Future Title Holders

Submitted by pup Link



I've often been asked, "What does it take to be a title holder?" Well, whether you would like to run for a title or not, I always try to push people to find more of a reason than "I wanna travel" or "the limelight could be fun." Before even thinking of the big prize, try to imagine the journey ahead. Think of the places you want to go and what you will do there. Do you know enough people to feel secure in your community? Because it sure will get lonely some days. Can you handle rejection? You may not be the winner after what could be a very long weekend. And, can you keep a level head when talking to people you may not get along with?

I do not wish to deter those from pursuing such a big accomplishment AND such a big responsibility. I simply want to shed light on a seemingly gregarious position and better prepare them for the road ahead. I do, however, recommend taking at least three things to heart: do you have the experience in the community to handle an infinite amount

of social situations? Do you have the financial stability to hold a title? And do you have a healthy mental state of mind for such a big responsibility?

If you do not have the experience, how can you teach others? If you do not have the finances, do not starve yourself for your community—and make sure you can keep a roof over your head. And finally, emotions will be high not only for the title holder but for others as well. I cannot tell you how many people I have brought up from the ground or had to push off a high horse. I also cannot tell you how important it is to enjoy the little things.

So, You Think You Have What It Takes to Be Handler?

By Sir Wolf, Pup Trainer



I often get asked, “What do I need to do to be a good Handler?” Or, “How do I become a Handler.” And, “What qualities should I have as a Handler?”

Well, to start, ask yourself, “Can I read my pup/s well?” The first and most important ability for any Handler to have is to be able to read one’s pup. I mean, that’s what were here for. You can’t have a Handler if you don’t have pups.

You have to be able to READ YOUR PUP, to be able to read how they react to you, how they might be reacting to a situation they’ve found themselves in, and how they may be reacting to other Handlers and pups. As the Handler, at the end of the day, you are responsible for the safety and wellbeing of your pup/s.

You are also, in many ways, a consistent safe space and guide for experimentation, development, and growth. An often under-looked aspect of one’s role as Handler is that of guide, to be able to see the Handler you ultimately want to be and the puppy your pup wants to be, and to work to get you both there as well and safely as you can. Puppy is a journey, one that should be explored in intimate (though, not necessarily sexual) community with another (as either a pup/Alpha or pup/Handler relationship). This journey must also be explored with an ever-open mind.

The first thing you should talk about with your pup is your expectations. Oh, and just know it now, in any kink/fetish relationship, communication, communication, COMMUNICATION! I cannot stress this enough! So, take time to sit down and communicate with your pup. Talk about what you both would like to get out of this relationship, and don’t forget to talk about each other’s wants and needs. These in essence become your goals, which helps you as Handler in your role as mentor and guide mentioned above. Now, you or your pup may not know exactly what you want at first, and that’s okay! Maybe you just need a regular cuddle partner. Maybe you just need someone who understands you and is there for you intimately, physically, and personally. Whether well-articulated at the outset or not, have goals in mind, even if they seem simple or obvious. They’ll grow. Trust me. Which is why communication is so key along this unique journey.

Now, on this journey, know that there will be a lot of things going on that I’m sure you and your pup/s will want to explore. Keep an open mind! Enjoy it! Don’t be afraid to try new things!

For example, and this may sound crazy, but go ahead and try being a puppy. That’s right, Handlers (and Trainers, too). Get down, put on a hood, and allow yourself to give a good “Bark!” Sympathy, not empathy, is key! As the saying goes, “Never judge a pup until you’ve walked five miles in their paws.” In other words, know what your pup knows. Experience what you pup experiences. Donning a hood every now and then allows you to see what your pup/s see. We don’t always think about it, but having a hood on and being down on the floor on all fours is very different life-experience: one’s vision is impaired, one’s line of sight is lower, MUCH lower, and all sound becomes muffled and hard to understand. Experiencing this will give you a much better understanding of what your pup sees and experiences.

Taking this kind of time and effort to know and understand your pup/s, I promise you, will be most rewarding. Remember, your pup/s are a reflection of you and the work you both put into your relationship, and I feel not only being empathetic, but sympathetic helps the two of you greatly!

Now, regarding the emotional support you are often called upon to give. Remember, your pup/s are still persons, and each one has his or her own feelings which matter and need to be acknowledged and (if positive) affirmed. A good Handler must be able to handle emotions because, trust me, you will be confronted with them—both your pup/s and your own. That’s right, you have emotions too that likewise need to be acknowledge and (if positive) affirmed, but just know that sometimes, you do have to set these aside (at least temporarily) in order for you to be present to your pup/s who need you. And this leads me to my next quality: you need to be emotionally stable. You need to be the rock, the one who is strong, stalwart, and dependable—at least in as much as one can be, I mean, we are all human. This need is even more pertinent whenever you are encountering a pup/s who may not be okay in a given moment and who need you to be their emotional support.

Now, I am not saying to forget or not to confront your own emotions. By all means, confront them,

acknowledge them, especially if there is anger, because if you don’t, well, that can lead to resentment or other counterproductive and dysfunctional issues down the line. If you ever find yourself angry—perhaps even with your pup/s—there is nothing wrong with saying, “I find myself very angry right now. I need to be alone.” Whatever, however you acknowledge such emotions, just make sure you take that break! And never, NEVER punish your pup when in such a state of mind. This can definitely lead to things you may regret later. Once you have reentered a calm state, have a conversation with your pup (if it is, in fact, the pup who made you upset in the first place) and figure out what happened. What went wrong? What was the trigger? And how might that trigger be avoided in the future. Having open and honest two-way communication is so important. I cannot stress this enough. Communication, communication, COMMUNICATION!

And, finally, have a sense of humor. You may fuck up, mistakes happen. Learn from them, fix them, and then maybe laugh about it. If you do fuck up, apologize, and don’t you dare add a “but” after any apology. “Oh, I’m sorry I hurt you, but . . .” No, no, NO! The moment you say the word “but,” it negates everything you said before it, meaning, you aren’t sorry at all. Apologies are simply, “I am sorry I hurt you. I will try my hardest never to do it again. I promise you.” Done. Enough said.

It says a lot about your character, being able to own up to your mistakes. I may get some shit for saying this, but if you can’t admit you have made a mistake and apologize for it, then you do not deserve to be a Handler—oh! And if you happen to be a Dom who can’t apologize, you do not deserve to be a Dom either. Just saying. Also, speaking of character, being trustworthy and having integrity are imperative. So many of these relationships are built on trust. You should be that consistent, safe space mentioned earlier for your pup to let go, explore, and experiment as they begin or continue on this amazing journey to find themselves.

I know this sounds like a lot, but don’t be scared. You don’t have to have every quality listed above. At the end of the day, you just need to be able to you are doing your best. Work on the qualities mentioned in this article. Some days may be better than others. But, in the end, be brave, be strong, be true. You’ll do great!



To the new pups out there...

WORDS FROM A SIR

By Sir Pounder

- You don't have to grow into everything pup overnight. Take the time to learn about and grow the pup inside you.
- Don't jump into a pack or be collared until you know what you want and have a strong foundation in who you are
- Growth takes time. If you rush it, you simply miss out on all the fun discoveries along the way. Be patient.
- Not all Handlers and Masters are created equal. Get to know someone before you hand over your pup headspace.
- You don't have to decide overnight if you are an Alpha/beta/omega. Just be a pup & let time decide.
- There's still a human behind the pup. Allow yourself time to recharge both the pup and the human. Find a balance.
- You are **NOT** alone. It may feel that way at times, but there's a loving community ready to embrace you with open paws.
- Be **YOU**. Don't be like anyone else. Be content with you and own it. Love yourself. This is what we mean in my pack when we say "not like you"

PUP'S BILL OF RIGHTS

1. All pups have the right to have their body, intellect, and emotions protected by their Handler/Trainer.
2. All pups have the right to choose the person whom they serve and to discontinue that service and take their leave without being subjected to physical, mental, or emotional abuse.
3. All pups have the right to be cared for, disciplined appropriately, and allowed to feel pride in their role.
4. All pups have the right to protected sex if they so wish.
5. All pups have the right to privacy if they so wish. No pup can be blackmailed, publicly humiliated, or physically coerced into service without their expressed desire to be so.
6. All pups have the right to defend themselves from physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.
7. All pups have the right to consent or not to consent to sexual activities.
8. All pups have the right to seek refuge, counsel, and advice from other community members without the expectation of sex, money, or any other service in return.
9. All pups have the right to a physically and emotionally available circle of friends.
10. All pups have the right to protect their own possessions and finances against intercession, theft, and non-consensual acquisition.

PUPPY RULES OF OWNERSHIP

1. If I like it, it's mine.
2. If its in my mouth, it's mine.
3. If I can take it from you, it's mine.
4. If I had it a little while ago, it's mine.
5. If I'm chewing something up, all the pieces are mine.
6. If it's mine, it must never appear to be yours anyway.
7. If it just looks like mine, it's mine.
8. If I saw it first, it's mine.
9. If you are playing with something and you put it down, it automatically becomes mine.
10. If it's broken, it's yours.
11. If I pee'd on it, it's mine.
12. If I stare at it long enough, it becomes mine.



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Ask Sage

by Alpha Sage



Dear Sage,

With the rise in online/app dating and kink profiles, how does one spot fake/predatory profiles?

In Love and Leather,
MuttOnline

Dear MuttOnline,

I recently dealt with a case like this when a friend of mine came to me asking if I knew someone they had met online. This person claimed to be a Sir in the city here and said he "[knew] how to take care of a sub." I did not recognize the person, so I asked a few of my respectable friends in the community. Well, they did not know the person either, so I suggested that my friend give the person on the app a short line of questions in order to determine if he was being authentic or not. My suggested questions were like:

1. "Oh, so you must know (insert name of person in the local community), right?"

If the person in the profile says yes, then contact the person you mentioned to double check. If s/he doesn't know him, he could very well be lying.

2. "What events do you attend in the area?"

If an event name is given, go ahead and contact some folks at/from the event. Ask if they recognize the person in the profile. If they don't, again, the person in the profile could be lying.

Well, as it turned out, the person in our story was, in fact, lying, and quickly blocked my friend upon discovery.

So, if you are unsure whether or not you are chatting with a fake, even predatory, profile, ask the person who s/he knows in the community. Then, consult the people's names s/he gives, if any. If someone online threatens to black-mail you, I suggest that you block them immediately! If you decide to go and meet someone from online that you don't know or are unsure of, make sure a friend knows where you will be and who the person is that you are meeting. Perhaps, even send your friend a photo. If you arrive at the meeting place and the person does not match their photo(s), again, leave immediately!

I have lived by these simple rules for many years and they have served me well.

In Love and Leather,
Alpha Sage

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Community Events

JULY - 2018

- 6th Welcome to Bear Week 2018, Provincetown, MA
- 7th London Gay Pride, prideinlondon.org, London, UK
- 7th-14th Welcome to Bear Week 2018 | ptownbears.org | Provincetown, MA
- 8th-15th Fetish Week | fetishweek.com | London, UK
- 12th-15th GearUp Weekend | gearupweekend.com | Clear Lake, CA
- 12th-15th IPAHW | ipahw.wordpress.com | St Louis, MO
- 13th Dads & Lads | The Eagle NYC | New York, NY
- 13th-15th San Diego Pride Weekend | San Diego, CA
- 14th Club Night | Arizona Men of Leather | Anvil | Phoenix, AZ
- 20th-22nd Midwest Rubber | Chicago, IL
- 19th-22nd Thunder in the Mountains | thunderinthemountains.com | Denver, CO
- 20th A-PAH Night | Anvil Bar | Phoenix, AZ
- 20th CPP Pup Night | Cell Block | Chicago, IL
- 20th-22nd Wet n' Hot | wetnhot.net | Palm Springs, CA
- 20th-22nd Kink Weekend 2018 | Oklahoma City, OK
- 20th-22nd Mr. Kentucky Leather 2018 | Louisville, KY
- 26th-29th SEAL 2018 Weekend | Parliament Resort | Augusta, GA
- 28th Panther Bar Night | Atlanta Eagle | Atlanta GA
- 28th Gear Night | Anvil Bar | Phoenix, AZ
- 28th Gear Night DSM | The Blazing Saddle | Des Moines, IA
- 28th Puppy Power Hours | The Blazing Saddle | Des Moines, IA
- 28th Berlin Gay Pride | csd-berlin.ed | Berlin, Germany
- 29th Up Your Alley | Folsom Street Events | San Francisco, CA

AUGUST - 2018

- 3rd-5th WILL | internationalleatherlegacy.com | Hilton Garden Inn | Dallas, TX
- 3rd-5th Best in Show 2018 | tcpuppypack.org | LUSH | Minneapolis, MN
- 4th-12th Gay Games | gaygames.org | Paris, France
- 8th-16th Mad Bear Beach Party Weekend | madbear.org | Torremolinos, Spain
- 9th-12th Pup-Tent | DawgWoodzCamp | Grassy, MO
- 10th-12th Bootblack Round Up 2018 | Touche | Chicago IL
- 11th Oregon State Leather Contest | Portland, OR
- 11th Club Night | Arizona Men of Leather | Anvil | Phoenix, AZ
- 12th Valley Pride Festival | Bullet Bar | North Hollywood, CA
- 17th A-PAH Night | Anvil Bar | Phoenix, AZ
- 17th CPP Pup Night | Cell Block | Chicago, IL
- 17th-19th Mr. Wisconsin Leather | mrwlevent.com | Madison, WI
- 18th Spartan MC Biker Bar Night | The DC Eagle | Washington, DC
- 23rd-26th Word Bear Weekend 2018 | worldbearweekend.com | Lexington, KY
- 24th Mr. Kilt International | World Bear Weekend | Lexington KY
- 25th Panther Bar Night | Atlanta Eagle | Atlanta GA
- 25th Gear Night | Anvil Bar | Phoenix, AZ
- 25th Gear Night DSM | The Blazing Saddle | Des Moines, IA
- 25th Puppy Power Hours | The Blazing Saddle | Des Moines, IA
- 29th-9/2nd IILSB-ICBB 2018 | Pantheon of Leather Awards | Dallas TX
- 30th-9/3rd Master/slave Conference 2018 | The Westin | Falls Church, VA

SEPTEMBER - 2018

- 6th-9th GLLA 2018 Weekend | greatlakesleather.org | Indianapolis IN
- 7th-9th 20th Anniversary Weekend | eagleBOLTbar | Minneapolis, MN
- 8th Club Night | Arizona Men of Leather | Anvil | Phoenix, AZ
- 8th-9th Folsom Europe | folsomeurope.info | Berlin, Germany
- 21st A-PAH Night | Anvil Bar | Phoenix, AZ
- 21st CPP Pup Night | Cell Block | Chicago, IL
- 22nd Mr. Long Beach Leather 2018 | Eagle562 | Long Beach, CA
- 22nd Panther Bar Night | Atlanta Eagle | Atlanta GA
- 24th Folsom Street Fair | Folsom Street Events | San Francisco, CA
- 27th-10/1st MLW XXII | matesleatherweekend.com | Provincetown, MA
- 29th Gear Night | Anvil Bar | Phoenix, AZ
- 29th Gear Night DSM | The Blazing Saddle | Des Moines, IA
- 29th Puppy Power Hours | The Blazing Saddle | Des Moines, IA

OCTOBER - 2018

- 5th-7th Houston Leather Pride | houstonleatherpride.com | Houston, TX
- 12th-15th Iowa Leather Weekend 2018 | Iowa Leather Weekend | Des Moines, IA
- 13th Club Night | Arizona Men of Leather | Anvil | Phoenix, AZ
- 19th A-PAH Night | Anvil Bar | Phoenix, AZ
- 19th CPP Pup Night | Cell Block | Chicago, IL
- 20th Mr. Sister Leather 2019: ALL STARS! | Eagle LA | Los Angeles, CA
- 25th-28th Palm Springs Leather Pride 2018 | PSLPD | Palm Springs, CA
- 27th Gear Night DSM | The Blazing Saddle | Des Moines, IA
- 27th Gear Night | Anvil Bar | Phoenix, AZ
- 27th Panther Bar Night | Atlanta Eagle | Atlanta GA

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